

TRICKSTERS THRIVE IN SOUTH AMERICA

***** BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN *****

Waiting for a Train at a Country Station.

Lima, Peru, March 1.
SOUTH AMERICA has always been a rich field for enterprise. The first merry-go-round that was taken into the interior made its owner a fortune in a few weeks. It was patronized by everybody, from the members of the city council down to the school children. It was a sorry old machine that had traveled the rounds of many country fairs circuits, and was about ready for the scrap pile, but it saw its palmist days when its owner wandered this way. The natives "went against the right." A barber put up his shop for tickets and rode them out inside of two days, and several citizens mortgaged their houses in order to raise money with which to purchase more rides. In a few weeks the lucky owner had taken in enough money to keep the wolf from his door for many a day. He finally traded the old merry-go-round for a half interest in the biggest store in town, converted his claim into cash and went on his way rejoicing.

He Numbered the Houses.

The man who furnishes the numbers for houses has been this way. He numbered them inside and out. In one little town he arranged with the authorities to be paid a certain price for each number he put up. His contract should have read "numbers to be attached to the door of each house," but he inserted the letter "s" and made door read plural. He put a number on every door of every house, inside and out, upstairs and down, and told them it was the latest style in the United States. There was some objection raised, but the agent glibly told them their city would soon grow, and when their mail was brought by carriers, each member of the family could have letters and papers left at the door of his or her room. He collected his money and promptly shook the dust of that town from his feet. The inhabitants are patiently waiting for the place to grow so they can have their mail delivered in their rooms.

The King of Grafters.

The greatest grafter who ever visited Peru, and the most successful, was Henry Melges. The accomplishments of all others are small compared to his operations. He was one of the boldest and most successful lobbyists in history. It is told of him that on a certain occasion, when he had a bill pending before congress which, he wished passed at once, that he went to a hall and selected for his partners the wives of the men who could vote his measure through for him. As he danced with them he left a thousand-dollar bill in the hand of each, and told them



Shackles Make Him Feel Important.

If the bill became a law he would pay his respects to them in a similar manner the next time he danced with them. There was no delay in making his measure a law when it came up for consideration.

The slickest trick that Melges ever worked was when he employed a French gambler to win back money spent as bribes. This dodge was worked with success for a long time and saved the plunger many thousands of dollars. The professional gambler posed as Melges' private secretary. When a big deal was about to be pulled off the parties who were to be bribed for putting it through would be asked to Melges' home for dinner. Just before sitting down the money would be given them. After the meal the promoter would be excused—he never played cards himself—and the secretary would invite the guests to join him in a game. He never failed to get the money back, because that was the way he earned his salary.

Rocky Roads to Travel.

Railroads were Melges' specialty and he built them no matter what the cost. The average resident of the United States does not properly appreciate the excellent transportation facilities he has at his command. If he ever trav-

els on some of the railroads of Central and South America then he will think of those at home and resolve that blessed is their name. I saw a sign at one station which stated that the morning train would leave at "3 o'clock or thereabouts." This meant that it might go at 8 sharp, or three or four hours afterward. If one of the officials happened to be going up the line, and a notion to hurry struck him, he might order the train out an hour ahead of time. Those two words "or thereabouts" could be given a very broad interpretation when necessary, and used to cover up a multitude of irregularities in the time table.

The printed passenger regulations of the railroad revealed some astonishing privileges. It quotes the rates for first, second, third and fourth class passengers, and stated that travelers of the fourth class might carry one rooster or one pig, provided the rooster was concealed in a sack, or the pig's nose was tied so it could not squeal. The regulations authorized a traveler of the

third class to carry both a rooster and a pig if they were properly sacked and gagged.

The cost of constructing some of these little "jerk water" lines was enormous. A contractor told me that 6,000 laborers died while he was building 115 miles of track through a swamp. The handling of this mongrel labor is an intricate problem. If you beat them in does little good. They will get up after a thrashing and kiss your hand. If you put them in chains they feel like martyrs. Instead of feeling disgraced the shackles seem to add to the native's sense of importance. He feels that he must be a bold, bad man to be treated in such a decisive way. It rather glorifies him in his own estimation.

The Dunes Cap Game.

One contractor who has had lots of experience with them, says it does no good to punish them in ordinary ways. He said he had one fellow who was very shiftless, and who was a constant source of trouble. He kept up a running fire of talk with all those around

him, and constantly shirked his work. Finally the contractor called him up from the trench, and said to him, "You are very tired. That is why you don't work better. Sit down here in the shade and rest. Have a drink of water and cool yourself with this fan." The astonished loafer had nothing to do but comply. His fellows began at once to tease him. He was in much the same position as the small boy in school caught at his mischief and made to wear a dunce cap.

The big booby stood the fire of his comrades for awhile and then began to hawl like a baby. He begged to go back to work, and offered to work all the rest of his life without a cent's pay, just to show that he was in earnest. When he was allowed to get back in the trench he did not shirk again, and on that job, from that time on, all that was necessary to arouse some idler was to ask him if he wanted to come up in the shade and rest.

Have Fun at Funerals.

The innumerable feast days cause much trouble among the laborers. They hate to work on a holiday. One contractor solved the problem by having a priest come to say early mass on the works, and giving his men a sort of barbecue later in the day. He gave

them several sheep to kill, and several kegs of rum to drink after the day's work was done. They always had a jolly spree of it, but it did not matter so long as their usual time had been put in. These natives turn every function into a feast. They have just as good a time at a funeral as at a wedding. Once I had a little fellow working for me as chore boy. One evening he came around quite dressed up and invited me to his house. He said his brother was dead and the family were going to give "a gathering." I made up my mind to attend the "gathering." It proved to be a sort of wake. The corpse was laid out in one of the front rooms. When the guests arrived they would go in and take a look at the dead body, never failing to mention how natural he looked, and what a bright boy he had been when he was alive. This part of the ceremony over, they would join the crowd in the front yard, where there was a wash boiler full of ice cream, ready to be served, and plenty of liquors of a strong nature. They played kissing and hugging games all night, and it was reported to me the day as having been a very jolly party.

The customs of these days are very tame indeed compared with those of the barbarians who were the ancestors of the poor wretches we see about now. When the Spaniards invaded the temples of the Inca sovereigns, during their search for treasure, they invariably found a room where human beings had been sacrificed. It was always a veritable chamber of horrors. In some dark corner would be the ugly, wooden idol in whose name all this needless slaughter was committed. The cannibal ceremonies of the past have been gradually reduced to harmless wakes at funerals, and wholesale sprees in which all kinds of human beings as their hides will hold.

Famous Chincha Island.

The Chincha Islands are pointed out to every passenger on the ships which sail down the coast of Peru. They are volcanic rocks sticking out of the water, and are famous for the large quantities of guano which were formerly deposited on them. Guano is a bird manure. It is valuable as a fertilizer. These ocean rocks were veritable roosting places for millions of sea birds, and gradually became covered over with their droppings. Twenty-five years ago this stuff sold for \$100 per ton, and its sale in the markets of the world brought more money into the treasury of Peru than any gold mine on earth has ever produced. The supply seemed almost inexhaustible, and for many years hundreds of ships were employed in transporting it to Europe and the United States. When the islands were at its height there would sometimes be as many as a hundred sailing ships waiting at the Chincha Islands for cargoes.

The work of dispatching them was very slow and it was not unusual for a vessel to be waiting eight or

nine months. Many a captain broke his heart at this waiting game. Great fraud was practiced by the Peruvian officials in charge. They would accept bribes and allow some captains to load ahead of others in the line. They would send those who refused to pay them to Callao to have their decks caulked, and force them to take their places at the end of the line when they returned.

Handling the guano was one of the nastiest jobs that men ever had to perform. When a deposit was disturbed the stench that came up from it was something dreadful. The men had to wear masks on their faces to protect their lungs and nostrils from the strong fumes of ammonia. Chinese coolies were imported to do the work, and many a poor devil, distracted from his awful task, deliberately jumped into the sea, or down a chute into a ship's hold filled with guano, the fumes of which soon choked him to death. The industry has about died out because the supply is nearly exhausted, and the demand is growing much less.

A British minister has just been sent to Bolivia, and this is the first representative England has had in that country for nearly forty years. The last diplomatic agent sent there arrived at the capital on the first day of the year and immediately applied for an audience with the president. It did not suit his majesty to receive ministers on that particular day, so he sent word for the Englishman to come around some other time. The rebuff rather nettled British dignity, and the president was very much surprised to receive a note a little later, saying that the accredited representative of Great Britain was not accustomed to being put off on pretexts by presidents or anyone else. Then the president got ruffled. The upshot of the matter was that the British minister was tied to a mule, head backwards, and driven out of the country in this undignified attitude.

When the outraged Englishman finally reached a cable office, he communicated the account of his woes to the British foreign office. The story goes that the official in charge, without taking the trouble to look up Bolivia's geographical position, ordered a battleship to the scene to insist upon proper amends being made for the insult. This was a great joke, for the reason that Bolivia is an inland country and has no port at all. When the British head of foreign affairs got down his map to look up Bolivia, he took his pen and scratched a line through it, thus severing all diplomatic connection with it. When the president of Bolivia heard of this several months afterwards, he retaliated in smart fashion. An American firm was getting out some new geographical maps for Bolivia and he wrote them: "Leave England blank on maps in our school books." This was many years ago, but there are still many of those old geographical maps in circulation which show no British red.

Bargain News--The Herald of Gainful Transactions for the Careful Buyer.
SPECIAL PURCHASES For Spring Business to Start
... The Season With a RUSH!
THERE WILL BE ASTOUNDING VALUES ON SALE THIS WEEK--READ ABOUT THEM!

NEW BLACK SILKS.

For Monday and All Week's Selling.

Thousands of yards of New Black Silks at prices lower than ever before at the beginning of a season.

Moneyback Taffeta Silks.

Money back is the name of a New Black Silk we are showing. These Silks are guaranteed to give satisfaction, or your money will be refunded. Money back Silks cost more than other good Silks. The guarantee is thrown in for good measure.

20 inches wide, guaranteed, per yard.....	\$1.00	25 inches wide, guaranteed, per yard.....	\$1.50
24 inches wide, guaranteed, per yard.....	\$1.25	36 inches wide, guaranteed, per yard.....	\$2.00

Black Beau de Soie.

In beautiful soft mellow finish, and the very best wearing qualities; an exceedingly fashionable fabric for entire dresses and shirt waists, and at prices rarely met.

20 inches wide, light weight and soft quality, per yard.....	73c	24 inches wide, extra fine finish quality, per yard.....	\$1.50
22 inches wide, double face, heavy quality, per yard.....	98c	26 inches wide, heavy, crisp and lustrous quality, per yard.....	\$1.50
22 inches wide, soft mellow finish quality, per yard.....	\$1.15	27 inches wide, heavy soft and lustrous quality, per yard.....	\$1.75

Black Taffeta Silk.

Attractive values in dependable Black Taffeta Silks, all of the very best kind and thoroughly good Blacks, and the prices are right.

19 inches wide, soft quality, good for ruffles or linings.....	48c	36 inches wide, very fine quality and soft finish.....	98c
20 inches wide, fine quality and crisp.....	69c	36 inches wide, heavy, crisp and lustrous quality.....	\$1.50
27 inches wide, medium weight and soft finish.....	89c	36 inches wide, extra heavy and very lustrous.....	\$1.75
22 inches wide, heavy quality and lustrous.....	98c		

In Our Wash Goods Dept

MONDAY MORNING, from 9 to 12 O'CLOCK, 20 PIECES NEW SPRING TWEED SUITINGS, close imitation of all wool fabrics, in beautiful mixtures, including tan gray, brown, navy, black and white, green and other spring effects, Tweed Suitings which combine the chic and style of Genuine Scotch Mixtures, at less than half the price of the wool materials, 23c values, at—

At 17½ Cents a Yard.

Advance Showing and Sale of Boy's Wash Suits for Spring 1904.

In Our Boys' Clothing Department.

Three Big Lots Bought Underprice to Be Sold Underprice.

BOYS' WASH SUITS—In plain crash and fancy stripe percales, neatly trimmed with large sailor collar and cuffs, age 3 to 9 years; values 75c; SPECIAL PRICE FOR THIS WEEK.....	50c
BOYS' WASH SUITS—In fancy stripe duck; this makes a very durable suit for boys from 3 to 9 years; values \$1.00; SPECIAL PRICE FOR THIS WEEK.....	75c
BOYS' WASH SUITS—In fancy stripe crash, extra well made and neatly trimmed; this makes a very neat suit for summer wear; age 3 to 9 years; value \$1.25; SPECIAL PRICE FOR THIS WEEK.....	\$1.00

ESTABLISHED 1864
T. J. Aberbach & Bro.
ONE PRICE TO ALL NEVER UNDERSOLD

SPRING BUSINESS

Started in With a Big Hurrah

And we intend to keep it up. We are not only Strong in Prices, but in Styles. Each Garment was selected with care and here are items explaining the Littleness of our Prices.

CLOAK AND SUIT DEPARTMENT.

\$10.95

BUYS A MOST ATTRACTIVE SUIT OF THE NEW 1904 STYLE. THESE NEW SPRING SUITS MADE OF ALL-WOOL VENETIAN SERGES AND CHEVIGOT IN THE PREVALENT ETON STYLES.

New Voile and Etamine Skirts

Separate Skirts in Voiles, Etamines and Fancy Mixtures, will be very popular this season. We are showing some very new ideas, Etamine and Voile at

\$8.95, \$10.00, \$12.50, and up to \$45



\$17.50

BUYS ONE OF THE LATEST FANCY MIXTURES IN SPRING SUIT FABRICS. UNEXCELLED FOR RICHNESS AND DURABILITY. THEY ARE MADE IN THE POPULAR ETON STYLE WITH HOUSE EFFECT. BODY LINED WITH TAFFETA SILK.

Special for Monday. 50 Ladies' Dress & Walking Skirts at \$3.95

Made of all-wool broadcloth, venetians, serges and chevots, all of this season's latest styles, not a skirt in the lot worth less than \$5.00, and some up to \$6.00; Monday's choice, \$3.95.

That Great Hosiery Sale Continues Another Week.

YOU'LL MISS THE GREATEST HOSIERY VALUES EVER OFFERED IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS SALE. IT OFFERS IRREPROACHABLE QUALITIES, IN THOROUGHLY DESIRABLE STYLES AT PRICES THAT SET YOU WONDERING.

CHILDREN'S PONY STOCKINGS—Full regular made quality, fast black, in heavy grade, for boys or medium weight for girls; they have reinforced knees, heels and toes; best 35c grade; sale price.....	23c
LADIES' ALL LACE OR LACE ANKLE STOCKINGS in the most beautiful patterns; fast blacks, grays or modes; also a variety of neatly embroidered styles; most excellent 75c grades; on sale at.....	49c
LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S fast black, seamless Cotton Hosiery; any size in the 15c grade; for this sale at.....	8c

New Infants' Wear.

ALL THE Dainties for baby, we have GATHERED WIDELY, CAREFULLY, CORRECTLY AND ARE SHOWING THE MOST DESIRABLE STYLES AND PRETTIEST CONCEPTIONS IN EVERYTHING THAT GOES TO MAKE BABY'S WARDROBE COMPLETE. IT'S A SHOWING YOU WILL WISH TO SEE. TO TEMPT YOU THIS WEEK WE MAKE SPECIAL PRICES ON THESE ITEMS.

INFANTS' LONG DRESS OF THE NAINSOOK, with round yoke of hemstitched tucks, surrounded by hemstitched lace trimmings; neck and sleeves edged with Valenciennes lace; a beautiful little dress, worth 90c; special price this week.....	59c
INFANTS' SHORT DRESSES—Two nobby styles, made of finest nainsook or wash chiffon, neatly trimmed in Val. lace or embroidery insertion and hemstitching; beautiful \$1.00 styles, on sale at.....	99c
INFANTS' JACKETS—Embroidered cashmere jackets; neat, dainty little styles; values up to \$2.25; for the season's opening sale.....	\$1.25

New Comers in the Season's Most Fascinating

White and Colored Wash Fabrics.

These Charming Fabrics stand higher than ever in feminine admiration, for the skill of designers and weavers seem to have reached the most exalted plane of artistic conception and execution. Our line this spring contains the most desirable patterns and kinds known to art. We direct to manufacturers for all our wants, which makes this department's regular prices on finest grades as low—even lower—than ordinary kinds sell for. Strong specialties in this lot.

FIFTY PIECES NEW SEER SUCKERS and Dress Gingham, 27 inches wide, in new checks and fancy stripes for children's and misses' wear, sold elsewhere at 15c; special, per yard.....

Another 100 pieces of the popular PUNJAB PERCALES just received, the most attractive new patterns for shirt waists and house gowns, light and dark color grounds, perfectly fast in washing, scarce at 15c; here, yard.....

A second shipment of GALATEA CLOTHS, a material possessing great wearing qualities for boys' and youths' garments, fast washable colors; this season's newest patterns, also plain colors, standard.....

20c quality; here, a yard.....

Novelty LINEN SUITINGS, handsome tweed effects, new color grounds; here, per yard.....

Embroidered shot effect and PERFORATED IMPORTED MADRAS in the most popular color grounds, value 65c; here, per yard.....

NEW WHITE WAISTINGS in rich satin brocades that look like silk, beautiful mercerized madras, velours and lacquered weaves; the best of the week, per yard, 65c and.....

In Our Dress Goods Dept.

Monday Afternoon 2 to 5 O'clock.

SPECIAL—Seventy-five pieces 36-inch ALL-WOOL ALBATROSS and Batiste in all the latest staple and fancy colorings. The most suitable material for EVENING GOWNS and WAISTS. This material has a soft, clinging, crepey effect. Value 60 and 65 cents; for the above three hours, at a yard—

39 Cents a Yard.

It Pays to Buy Footwear of Us.

Oxfords to the Front Again.

Oxfords or Low Shoes are More Stylish than Ever this Season. We are showing—

The Best Makes, The Latest Styles at The Lowest Prices in

Our Shoe Department. Specials for This Week.

SPECIALS FOR THIS WEEK:	
LADIES' KID OXFORDS, \$2.00 VALUES.....	\$1.48
LADIES' KID OXFORDS, \$2.25 VALUES.....	\$1.69
LADIES' KID OXFORDS, \$2.75 VALUES.....	\$2.25
See our window display of stylish Footwear, Rightly Priced. SAMPLE OXFORDS, Worth \$1.50 to \$3.00, This week.....	\$1.00